DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 080 269 RC 007 202

AUTHOR Greymountain, Gus; And Others
TITLE Urban Indian Project.
INSTITUTION National Indian Training and Research Center, Tempe, Ariz.
PUB DATE [72]
NOTE 23p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS Acculturation; Alcoholism; American Indians; *City Problems; Education; Health; Housing; *Needs; *Nonreservation American Indians; *Urban Immigration; *Urban Studies
IDENTIFIERS Arizona; *Phoenix Indian Center

ABSTRACT

The second of a 2 phase study, this project provided information for the non-Indian population about problems and needs of urban American Indians. Phase I (1971) discussed urban Indian experiences and trends; compared differences and highlighted issues of Indian urbanization. Phase II focused entirely on the urban Indian community. The thrust was aimed at determining the major topics and themes of importance in urban Indian life. Data was gathered primarily by interviewing. Over the 3 months of Phase II, 40 people were interviewed, including numerous organizations, agencies, and departments within the city and state government. Findings indicated that the state employment office does not have anyone to work directly with Indians. Statistics on Indians living in Metropolitan Phoenix were few. Some 7,000 Indians were arrested annually for charges such as drunk and disorderly, driving while intoxicated, and drinking under age. Other findings covered education, health, housing, and welfare. Six major recommendations were made, such as developing further social service programs in relationship with the existing Indian Center. (FF)

FILMED FROM BEST AVAILABLE COPY

ED 080269

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

URBAN INDIAN PROJECT

Gus Greymountain
trainee on

Community Education Leadership Program

[1972]

RC002202

RECEIVED
SEP 24 1973
NMSU
E.R.I.C.

URBAN INDIAN PROJECT

I. INTRODUCTION

In 1970, the Phoenix Indian Center, realizing the need for a larger agency to deal with the many problems of the Phoenix Urban Indians, submitted to the United Fund a proposal for a demonstration project. Prior to this proposal the Indian Center had been operating on a budget in the neighborhood of $8,000.

The Indian Center, was able then, to obtain a $100,000 grant from the Indian Desk of the Office of Economic Opportunity. This money was funneled through the LEAP (Leadership Education for the Advancement of Phoenix) Organization, who administer the funds. The Community Council, in their efforts to assist the Indian community brought together Indians representing different Indian organizations, who formed the Urban Indian Project.

The basic purpose of the project was to provide information for the non-Indian community about problems and needs of the Urban Indian and make recommendations to the appropriate agencies, both voluntary and governmental, as to the ways and means to meet these needs.

It soon became obvious that although, the need was known in this area, there was no comprehensive study or plan for the Phoenix area.

This led to the appointment of the Ad Hoc Committee, to determine how a comprehensive plan could be accomplished, to develop a proposal for a research project; to collect infor-

mation to assist in the planning of programs for the Urban Indian. The committee met several times with representatives from the National Indian Training and Research Center.

In May 1971, the Community Council entered into a contract with the National Indian Training and Research Center, to conduct a study; the ultimate focus of which would be an action research project proposal.

In October 1971, Phase I of the study was completed and submitted. Phase I contained background information on similarities on Urban Indian experiences, trends, compared differences and highlighted the issues involved in American Indian Urbanization.

Phase II of the Phoenix Urban Indian Study is now complete. Phase II of the study is focused entirely on the Phoenix Urban Indian community. The thrust of the study has been aimed at determining the major topics and themes, so as to pinpoint the issues of importance in Urban Indian life. Phase II was conducted with the hope of accomplishing this end.

II. METHODOLOGY

A. Staff: Coordinator of Phase II - Sidney Beane
Director of Internship at Cook Christian Training School, Tempe, and also a member of the Ad Hoc Committee.

Researchers: Gus Greymountain and Wes Martin of the National Indian Training and Research Center.

Volunteer Workers: Liberal Jackson
Floyd Bringing Good
Kent Track
Sam Scott

B. Data-Gathering

The primary process employed was interviewing. During the three months time on Phase II of the study, over 40 persons were interviewed including numerous organizations, agencies, and departments within the city and state governments.

Emphases was on seeking out varied opinions and feelings on issues concerning the Indian community. Efforts were made to up-date existing statistics if available and if not available (which was often the case), whenever possible research was conducted in order to provide some useable knowledge of the subject or area. Time was also spent talking to Indian people within the community.

C. Progress Report

On January 13, 1972, the Phase II progress report was submitted to the Ad Hoc Committee. In attendance were:

Gregg Goggin - Community Council
E. Johnson - Phoenix Indian Center
Liberal Jackson - Volunteer Worker
Floyd Bringing Good - Volunteer Worker
Paul Klores - Community Council
Kent Ware, Sr. - Arizona Indian Centers, Inc.
Angie Torres - Arizona Civil Rights Commission
Sid Beane - Cook Christian Training School
Lem Ignacio - Center of Community Change

The progress report was given in the form of a brief presentation on the results of interviews up to that date. The Items that were discussed were:

1. Existing organizations not representative of the Indian Community.
2. There is a controversy revolving about the Phoenix Indian Center. This controversy has brought about a tenseness in the Phoenix Indian community, especially between organizations. However, it was also expressed that the center was doing a better job than ever before.
3. Phoenix Indian Center is fulfilling a much needed service but there is also a need for a larger organization to work with that portion of the Indian community, in need of services in other areas such as community organization which will be strong enough to address itself in issues such as discrimination, employment, housing and health. The need for a coalition was expressed many times.
4. There is a need for a job index, which would provide an up-to-date listing of skilled and/or Indian professionals in Phoenix. This could be kept in an Information Center for which there is also a need.
5. Communications between organizations are poor.
6. More youth involvement is needed.
7. "Grass-roots" people are not aware of or very involved in the community services.

III. SCOPE

The survey focused primarily on the Phoenix Indian community. The survey did not intend to study problem areas in depth, but to gather existing data as compiled by various agencies. In depth research should follow.

In terms of location, there is no central Indian community, only concentration of Indians, the four principal areas being:

1. Downtown Phoenix - Along Van Buren from 35th Ave. - 24th St.
2. Indian School Rd. - 7th Ave. to 16th St.
3. Scattered families in between the above mentioned areas
4. The Glendale - Sunnyslope area.

When reference is made to the "Phoenix Indian community", this includes Tempe, Mesa, Scottsdale, Glendale. This study has also taken into account the transient population and the nearby reservations (Salt River, Gila River, Maricopa).

The BIA, Indian Health Service, state government agencies as well as city government agencies were among those contacted. In the case of the before mentioned emphasis was placed on the city government.

Indian organizations, churches, schools, businesses, and community people were interviewed. This in order to obtain as wide a spectrum of Indian community life as possible. Professional as well as blue-collar workers, established, middle-class Indians as well as the transient, down-on-his-luck type.

Opinions, experience and recommendations, were asked for and obtained, all of this in order to obtain as accurate a picture as possible. Many times we could not obtain accurate

up-to-date statistics on Indian people. These statistics are needed and more in-depth studies should be made and appropriate agencies should be encouraged to gather statistical data on the off-reservation Indian population.

IV. NEED

The need for a coalition of community organizations, with maximum involvement and input from the community, for the community is of the utmost importance and should have the highest priority. Because of the lack of an organized Indian community, there is a distinct lack of a sense of community with which the Indian people can identify.

The Indian community because they have no strong voice are often passed over and ignored by the city government when it plans programs, employment, etc.

To realize the potential of a united Indian community organization, one has only to look at the Mexican-American coalition (Valle Del Sol) and the Black community. These two ethnic groups have made great strides forward, but only after organizing.

The Mexican-American coalition is composed of many different organizations from all elements of the Chicano community. Conservative, progressive, social, political, educational, youth groups, and when they have their differences, they keep them inside the coalition and settle it among themselves. There are no phone calls made to the mayor's office, when one organization attacks another. An organized community would prevent duplication of services by various organizations. A blanket organization is needed which would include representatives from all the Indian groups in Phoenix, to quote an oft used phrase "in unity there is strength".

V. COMMUNITY ISSUES

The absence of a definable Indian community with an organization to speak for it, creates powerlessness to deal with political-social issues. This was amplified in the matter of Urban Indian Health which just recently became an issue. The community had to go about calling meetings, organizing, electing officers, etc. This lengthy process could have been avoided if an organication had been in existence to deal with just such issues.

There are other issues affecting the Phoenix Urban Indian community. In areas of employment, education, and discrimination. For such political issues, a strong independent organization is needed, non-dependent upon city funds or governmental funds, free to move, to take action without being manipulated by agencies such as LEAP and without fear of having funds cut off.

This study also included looking about for monies to fund such a coalition and funds are available. The opinion has been expressed that it is too soon for a coalition. It is our belief that it is better to be too soon than to be too late. There is a danger that if we wait much longer that some people in the community will be "turned off" completely from participation in any type of organization, simply because the ones now in existence have done little or nothing. It is almost summertime and who will speak for the youth? Who will help them to find employment and recreation? Youth involvement is but one of the issues affecting the community. Foremost is the need for a strong political-economical power base with which to deal with the immediate problems and the source or reason

for the existence of such. In the words of an official for the city's planning department, the reason for the failure of the city to take into consideration the city's Indian population in it's planning is, "Indians haven't been putting any organized pressure on the city government."

VI. FINDINGS

A. Employment

The state employment office does not have anyone to work directly with Indians. Very few statistics on Indians living in metropolitan Phoenix are available. The Phoenix Indian Center does have a job bank which plays a tape every day on jobs available. It does manage to place some people in jobs, how many we do not know.

The city government of Phoenix, in 1970-71 employed 51 American Indians out of a total of 5,413, approximately 9%. The majority of these workers were operative semi-skilled (28). There were no Indians in administrative or professional positions. Of the 51 Indians employed by the city, 32 of these work for Water and Sewers Department, this implies clearly that the city of Phoenix is practicing institutional racism. To cite a few departments where there are no Indians employed; city court*, fire department, human relations**, city manager's personnel***, planning, police*, and public housing.

* There are only 2 Indian policemen now on the police force, and at last word, one in the academy. There are no Indians working with the courts. The percentage of Indians going through the court, and then to jail, is high. There are no Indians employed by the Police Department, in their correctional facilities; These facts point out only too clearly that something should be done by someone and it's pretty obvious that the city is not

going to do anything about it unless organized pressure is applied.

** The Human Relations Commission is carrying on a Own-Recognizance Program in the city court every day to interview prisoners and determine who without funds to post bail should be let free on their own recognizance, rather than plead guilty and accept a jail term. They agreed to our committee of 5 that they would attempt efforts at making a position available in which an Indian person would be given priority. These efforts failed because Glenwood Wilson, prominent Cherokee, took ill.

*** The same tactics worked quite well for us with the city's EEO Officer in Personnel. Going together as a group representing the Phoenix Urban Indian Project and the ASU Indian Alumni Association, we confronted the Personnel Officer and inquired as to why there wasn't an Indian working there when obviously the need was apparent. They agreed to hire one. These incidents carried off only by four or five persons, are cited only to demonstrate that a political power base, is needed to act in behalf of the Indian community. One can imagine how many changes could be effected by a strong organization with community backing.

B. Alcoholism

The law enforcement agencies of Maricopa County and the city of Phoenix, arrest some 7,000 Indians annually for charges such as Drunk and Disorderly, Driving While Intoxicated, and drinking under age. Statistics of the city court's department reveal that 25% of all males arrested for liquor related offenses are Indian and 50% of the women arrested for the same offenses are Indian. (In spite of the high percentage of contact with police, the Phoenix Police Department employs only 2 Indian officers.) Indian people account for, at the most, 2% of the city's population. The Indian is one of the smallest minority groups in Phoenix and yet one that has the greatest problem. These figures affect each and every Indian in Phoenix, directly or indirectly. Therefore, we should concern ourselves with the situation, and determine where our efforts will be best put to use.

Of the 7,000 Indians arrested annually, many are visiting Indians from outlying reservations, who come to the city and are locked up for being drunk at least once and possibly many more times, before they leave.

Some of these Indians, it is known are victims of bartenders who are not exercising their responsibility of cutting off Indian customers, who have had enough to drink; as long as they have the price of a drink they will be served. Others are victims of promotion-seeking police officers, simply out to bust as many people as they can.

These and other factors manifest themselves in the situation we have before us, namely, the problem of the Indian with the habitual drinking arrest record and the city's inability to cope with the situation.

Presently, in Phoenix, there are several alcoholism programs available for Indians to participate in. The only one for Indians is at the Phoenix Indian Center, its degree of success is not known by the writer. The Phoenix Indian Medical Center does not offer anything in the way of a detoxication center which is sorely needed at this time. PIMC only treats alcoholism when a patient is admitted suffering from some other disease or injury, and alcoholism. The facilities are just not available at the PIMC.

The city should explore the feasibility of a detoxication treatment center at the compound for those persons repeatedly arrested on drunk charges both Indian and non-Indian. Such a project should include counseling by Indian personnel.

A meeting was held on January 13, 1972, of various agencies and resources in Maricopa County concerned with the problem of alcohol abuse and alcoholism, to discuss this matter in relation to services (or lack of) provided for Indians residing in Phoenix. The needs were discussed and it was pointed out that there was a very definite need to unite and coordinate efforts in seeking funds and developing a successful program treatment of Indian alcoholics.

From this group the Phoenix Urban Indian Alcoholism Coalition, was formed and a committee was appointed to

gather existing data and to invite the participation of other groups. The information that was gathered was to be used to write a proposal for funding of an Indian Halfway House.

Progress has been slow for the Alcoholism Coalition, St. Luke's Hospital and the Indian Health Service have been the two most concerned with making the Indian Halfway House a reality. As the Indian Center has an Indian alcoholism program on-going and does have an outreach worker, their input is very much needed, as surely by now they have developed some expertise and are concerned.

C. Education

The Phoenix Urban Indian seeking education for himself and his life must depend upon the state, county, and city public school systems. There are some vocational training programs for the general public which the Indian may take advantage of such as MDTA. Special adult education classes are available at the Phoenix Indian Center, how successful or what the participation has been is not known.

In the Phoenix Union High School Systems the number of Indian students is 409. The only reason that these statistics are available is because the schools are required to submit the number of American Indian students attending, in order to request JOM funds to supplement the school budget. The JOM Act passed provides money for Indian education. Money under that Act is to be spent only for Indians.

Indian children bring millions of Federal dollars each year into public school districts. Indian children are counted 3 times under 3 different statutes, in order to make a school district eligible for Federal funds. These funds are supposed to support both the basic educational program in Indian schools and special programs designed to meet the unique needs of Indian children.

This is the legal framework. But, what really happens to the money? How are Indian children faring in Phoenix public schools?

These are questions that need to be answered, and yet one can almost with complete certainty say that enough is not being done with the Federal monies to promote the education of Indian children.

Recently the Chicano coalition and the Black community through organized efforts brought enough pressure to bear upon the PUHSS, that the school district agreed to hire employees on a percentage basis. The percentage corresponding to the percentage of Blacks and Chicanos enrolled in the school. There are considerable differences in the cultural backgrounds of these two ethnic groups and that of the Indian, this we know. However, this is only mentioned to cite the fact that organized pressure can bring changes.

More in-depth study is needed in this area. There are few statistics available.

There is a substantial number of young people attending trade schools or junior colleges, under programs sponsored

by the employment assistance branch of the BIA. There is little that is offered to these students in the way of recreation, most are here from reservations and the only places for them to go to meet other students are to bars frequented by Indians.

Both the junior colleges and Arizona State University have Indian clubs, these students are concerned and wish to become involved in the community. These young people should be encouraged to participate and become involved. The effect that this would have on the Indian community could only be good. More efforts should be directed to meet this need.

D. Health

There is very little information available on health problems concerning the Urban Indian community. Most of the Indian people make use of the Phoenix Indian Medical Center, of late, however, there have been rumors circulating of the intention of the IHS to make certain urban Indians ineligible for service at the Indian Hospital. This issue brought together a large number of Indian people who organized to protest their right to medical services at the Indian Hospital.

As tax paying citizens, Indian people are eligible for medical treatment at the county hospital, but it has long been the policy of the county hospital to refer all Indians to the Indian hospital. Therefore, if certain Indian people are denied medical treatment at the PIMC

because they are "urban" Indians, this would indeed create a critical situation.

In the very near future the outcome of this issue may create more problems for Indians residing in urban areas. However, because they have organized, the Indian community's position is much improved.

City health agencies have stressed the need for a detailed study to be done on the Indian population of Phoenix, so that they can include Indians in their program planning. It is not known what the health needs of the Indian community are.

Also in Phoenix there is a need for a program aimed at helping Indian youth to become more aware of alcohol and drug abuse. In speaking to an officer within the Phoenix Police Department, this need was brought out and ways to meet it were discussed. The Phoenix Police Department would be willing to work with any youth or other group interested in preventing alcohol and drug abuse among young people. This is a definite need, and cannot be over emphasized.

E. Housing

There is very little information available on the housing needs of Indians in Phoenix, except that there is a need for a housing specialist to deal directly and specifically with this problem. The city of Phoenix, in their low-income housing projects have approximately 30 Indian families, with 3 families (out of a total of 700 applicants) on the waiting list. The reasons for the low

number of Indians participating in the city's low-income housing projects, are not clear. However, it is known that Indians prefer to live among Indians and that the projects are either predominately Black or Chicano. This hesitancy among Indians to assimilate, would be a major factor to take into consideration when planning future housing projects for Indians (if ever).

The Phoenix Indian Cneter during the month of January, had 28 requests from Indian people for housing. They are not equipped to handle the housing problems of Phoenix's Indian population, however, a housing specialist could be very useful working with or out of the Indian Center.

F. Welfare

There were no statistics available for the city welfare department. The only available statistics are those for Maricopa County, and the figures we were given for Indian participants in the state welfare program was very low. Obviously, more study is needed in this area.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. The survey concludes the lack of any adequate data on Phoenix Urban Indians problems from which to plan and develop comprehensive program solutions.

- We recommend an in-depth coordinated research effort into the designated problem areas surveyed in this report.

B. In conjunction with a coordinated research program the is further need for an organized community-wide communications and planning network.

- We recommend the expansion of the Urban Indian Project Committee as the mechanism for the development of such a network or coalition.

C. The survey concludes that the Phoenix Indian Center has currently the most comprenensive programatic approach to solving Phoenix Urban Indian problems as a social service agency.

- We recommend that further social service programs be planned and developed in relationship with the existing Indian Center.

D. The survey concludes the lack of any coordinated social action effort within the Urban Indian community.

- We recommend the proposed Indian community-wide network or coalition assume primarily a planning coordinating and social action approach to community problem-solving.

E. The planning and participation in the development of such a network should remain open to all interested Indian groups and organizations.

- We, therefore, also recommend the further utilization of the Committee approach, rather than presently incorporating as an organization.

F. The survey concludes the necessity of employing a full-time Indian community organizer to carry-out under the auspices of the Urban Indian Project Committee the previously stated recommendations.

- We recommend the utilization of an agreed upon conduit organization to fund such a position.
- We further recommend that the Project Committee approach the existing Indian organizations, Community Council and United Fund for resources to hire a community organizer.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

William Joe - Arizona State Employment Service

Angie Torrez - Arizona Civil Rights Commission

Milford and Jeannie Sanderson - Amerind

Rose King - Director, Phoenix Indian Center

Dorothy Allen - Phoenix Indian Center

Jim Hyslop - Phoenix Indian Center Board of Directors - Chairman

Curt Nordwall - Arizona Indian Centers, Inc.

Juana Lyons - Arizona State Employment Service

Capt. Doze Nelson - Phoenix Police Dept., Community Relations Officer

Henry Cabiroc - Human Relations, City of Phoenix

Jim Boozer - Human Relations, City of Phoenix

Rev. Joed Miller - First Presbyterian Church

Leon Ignacio - Center for Community Change

Dan Hopkins - Concerned Indians

Paul Klores - Valley National Bank

Manny Ballesteros - Phoenix Public Housing

Pat McGee - Indian Development Districts of Arizona

Grace McCullough - Indian Development Districts of Arizona

Rudy Paz - Personnel Officer (EEO) City of Phoenix

Eugene Wilson - Public Health Service, Phoenix Area Office

Sam DeCorsi - PHS-IHS, Phoenix Area Office

Joyce Neil - Maricopa County Hospital, Social Services

Jesse Sixkiller - Director, ACTION Agency

Cecil Corbett - Director, Cook Christian Training School

Vince Doyle - LEAP Center #1, Director

Kit Evans - Valley National Bank - CIRCA Committee

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Godfrey Richey - City of Phoenix - Census Dept.

Warner Leipprandt - Phoenix City Planning

Mayor John Driggs - City Council

Tri-C Community Council

Mr. Kinsman - Statistician, Phoenix Union High School System

Leonard Miller - United Methodist Church

Kent Fitzgerald - NCIW - Episcopalian Church

Virginia McNeure - Aged Nutritions Project

Milt Gan - Comprehensive Health Planning

Eugene Crawford - National Indian Lutheran Board

Dave Rammage - Center for Community Change

John Lewis - Southwest Indian Development

Bill Street - LEAP Community Worker - City of Phoenix

Bill Eden - LEAP

General Medical Officers Association - Phoenix Indian Medical Center

Phoenix Urban Indian Alcoholism Coalition

Indian students - Arizona State University

Alumni - Arizona State University

Phoenix College Indian Club

These are some of the people interviewed, or who contributed reports, studies, or in some way assisted in the completion of Phase II of the Urban Indian Project study. This is not a complete list.